DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 207 354 FL 012 560

AUTHOR Kovac, Ceil; Cahir, Stephen R.
TITLE When Is Reading? Exploring Functional Language. Participant's Manual.
INSTITUTION Center for Applied Linguistics, Washington, D.C.
SPONS AGENCY Carnegie Corp. of New York, N.Y.
REPORT NO ISBN-87281-136-0
PUB DATE Jun 81
NOTE 69p.; For related documents see FL 012 558-563.
AVAILABLE FROM Center for Applied Linguistics, 3520 Prospect Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20007 ($3.50 for participant's edition, $4.00 for instructor's edition; videotapes also available).

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Applied Linguistics; *Child Language; Class Activities; *Classroom Communication; Inservice Teacher Education; Postsecondary Education; Primary Education; *Protocol Materials; *Reading; Videotape Recordings
IDENTIFIERS *Functional Linguistics

ABSTRACT

This series, designed for use in inservice teacher workshops, addresses the question, "How do children and teachers use language to get things done?" The transcribed classroom discourse presented and discussed in each volume illustrates functional language in a real context based on the videotaping of undoctored classroom events from kindergarten and grades 1 to 3. Each manual contains workshop exercises to be used with the videotape, describes the theoretical framework from which the work stems, and includes verbal transcripts of the language used in the tapes. The present volume illustrates that learning how to read extends far beyond "official" reading time in classrooms. The videotape depicts the classroom reading of a menu and a recipe, the social work and decoding involved in a reading group, and children's comprehension and prediction when they are read a story by the teacher. (Author/JB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Center for

Applied Linguistics

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organizatio originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

WHEN IS READING?

Participant's Manual

Ceil Kovac
Stephen R. Cahir

EXPLORING FUNCTIONAL LANGUAGE
Stephen R. Cahir, Series Coordinator

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The preparation of these materials would have been impossible without the cooperation and willing participation of many people. We are especially indebted to Roger Shuy for consistent and accurate insight and guidance throughout the entire project; to Peg Griffin for invaluable and substantive comment and criticism on both the content and format of the materials; to the staff of the office of Communication and Publications of the Center for Applied Linguistics, in particular Begay Atkinson, Dora Johnson, and our dauntless editor, Wendy Ward; to Peter Volkert, our video consultant, for his sense of humor, exceeded only by his skill; to Ruby Berkemeyer, our typist, for her ability and endless patience. We heartily thank the researchers and the elementary school teachers and children who participated in the project upon which our work is based--Children's Functional Language and Education in the Early Years (supported by the Carnegie Corporation of New York). We also thank the individuals who assisted us in our field-tests, both as workshop coordinators and as participants. Finally, we gratefully acknowledge the Carnegie Corporation of New York for supporting all phases of this project.

S.R.C.
C.K.

Cover art: Ceil Kovac

ISBN: 87281-136-0

June 1981

Copyright © 1981
By the Center for Applied Linguistics
3520 Prospect Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20007

Printed in the U.S.A.

CONTENTS

Foreword v

Introduction 1

Suggestions for Using These Materials 2

Discussion 3

Exercises 14

Theoretical Issues 20

Guidelines for Transcription 27

Tape Transcript 28

FOREWORD

Exploring Functional Language is a unique set of materials that addresses what is probably the most important question one could ask about language use in the schools: "How do children and teachers use language to get things done?" However obvious such a question may seem, it is unfortunately true that we seldom ask it. Instead, the schools usually try to determine such questions as "How correct is the usage of the children?" or "How mature is the children's language development in terms of pronunciation or grammar?" These are not unimportant questions, but they focus only on the *forms* of language rather than on its *functions*. That is, the questions address the social judgments we can make about language (is it correct or not) rather than the cognitive functions (what does the language get done).

These protocol tapes and manuals effectively illustrate functional language in its real, classroom context with videotapes of the undoctored, actual classroom events. The manuals contain workshop exercises to be used with the videotape, describe (in clear language) the theoretical framework from which the work stems, and include verbal transcripts of the language used in the tapes. All videotape samples (15 to 20 minutes in length) were taken from a large research project conducted at the Center for Applied Linguistics (Peg Griffin and Roger Shuy, *Children's Functional Language and Education in the Early Years*, 1978). Separate manuals accompany each videotape.

A Way with Words describes the principle of functional language in some detail, calling into question conventional school language assessment which deals only with language forms (sounds, vocabulary and grammar) while often ignoring meaning relationships (semantics) and language use (pragmatics).

What's What with Questions explores the use of question asking strategies in the classroom. It points out that questions do a great deal more work than merely getting information. Children have a variety of ways to use questions and this protocol suggests ways that educators can make use of them for in-service or pre-service training. *It's Your Turn* provides information about the verbal and non-verbal aspects of classroom turns at talking, when it succeeds as well as when it breaks down. *Transitions: Activity between Activities* focuses on what has been conventionally considered "down time" by educators. The videotape and manual describe how transitions can function as an actual learning event, socially and cognitively. A similar focus is presented in *When Is Reading?*, which illustrates visually that learning how to read extends far beyond "official" reading time in classrooms. Although much of the focus of these videotapes and manuals is on children's functional language use, teacher talk is also noted, especially in *Teacher Talk Works*, a visible demonstration of talk that teaches, answers, evaluates, manages, and reprimands.

There is no way that a brief overview of this sort can capture the richness of the actual videotaped events in this series. That is precisely the reason, in fact, that the authors decided to present this important information in protocol form. These are *not* books about children's functional language. They *are* children's functional language, captured in natural, real life settings, selected from hundreds of hours of research samples and presented in a way which is convincing, clear and dynamic.

Roger Shuy

INTRODUCTION

☆ **Do the children in your classroom read?**

☆ **What does a reading activity look like?**

☆ **What are some activities in your classroom that involve reading?**

☆ **Could these activities be successfully accomplished without reading?**

☆ **How much reading gets done in reading groups?**

☆ **How will these materials help in real classroom situations—are they relevant and applicable to primary school teaching?**

These are some of the questions that will be dealt with in the materials. This instructor's manual is part of a packet that also includes participants' manuals and a videotape. The goal of these materials is to explore the nature of reading in elementary school classrooms. The videotape is the result of a larger study that examines children's use of language in a school setting. The videotape and the transcript bring together instances of language usage and reading by children in a first grade classroom at various times during a regular school day. The materials are intended for use in pre-service and in-service teacher training, but they also may be relevant and of interest to a variety of audiences, including linguistics students and reading and educational specialists.

SUGGESTIONS FOR USING THESE MATERIALS

The discussion and exercise sections of this manual are designed to be flexible and interchangeable, to accommodate individual learning styles, time schedules, and your own goals.

If you are a participant using this manual in pre-service or in-service training, your instructor will plan a workshop based on these materials. **If you are working on your own,** you may find either of the following approaches helpful or you may wish to devise one of your own.

The transcript reflects the contents of the videotape. Satisfactory work can be done with this manual when the videotape is not available.

OPTION A

(1) Read through the transcript. We suggest this as the first step for any approach, since it is often difficult to read while listening to and watching the tape at the same time.

(2) Look at the tape, if available.

(3) Read the discussion sections, both general and specific.

(4) Read the "Theoretical Issues" section (strongly suggested though not necessary to complete the exercises).

(5) Do at least the following exercises:

I. Section A #1-3
Section B #1-3
Section C #1, 2
Section D #1, 2

II. Summary Exercise #1

(6) Do as many of the remaining exercises as possible, rereading the discussion section as appropriate or necessary.

OPTION B

(1) Read through the transcript.

(2) Look at tape, if available.

(3) Do the following exercises:

I. Section A #1-3
Section B #1-3
Section C #1, 2
Section D #1, 2

II. Summary Exercise #1

(4) Read the discussion sections, both general and specific.

(5) Read "Theoretical Issues" (strongly suggested).

(6) Do as many of the remaining exercises as possible, rereading the discussion section as appropriate or necessary.

DISCUSSION

This discussion section is intended mainly as a point of reference for users of this manual who are participating in workshops or classes based on these materials. It may be, however, that issues raised in this section can serve as departure points for further discussion or as a basis for assignments.

INTRODUCTION

Teachers and educational specialists may well ask "What kind of a question is 'When is Reading?' . . . what do you mean by that?"

Many articles, chapters, and books on reading have an implicit statement: *This is what reading is*. These discussions may be limited to part of the process (appreciation or word identification) or to an aspect of the learning process (speed reading or beginning reading). Some may be theoretical in nature while others may involve instructional or assessment programs for reading.

Other articles, chapters, and books on reading are surveys that raise an implicit question: *What is reading?* These, too, may be limited to a particular focus, to a certain model or theory, or to activities involved with reading. Toward the end of this booklet you will find some discussions of these issues and some references for further reading.

Our work is different; the question is explicit: *When is reading?* It is a simple question that a child might ask at any time. Children know that there will be a formal time slot in almost every elementary school classroom for a set of activities involving written text.

The question *When is reading?* is also more complex than is often noticed. Children might say, at the end of a school day, that they didn't have reading that day. Parents might view that state of affairs with dismay, but they would not doubt that such a statement could be true. Teachers might agree with this statement. Our vantage point, the one that this manual will provide to you, shows us that it is almost impossible for children to "not have reading" during a classroom day. There may not have been a "reading period", but reading, we claim, would have happened. The day's schedule was read; labels in a science experiment were read; instructions for the math worksheet were read. The issue, then, is to find the reading that is independent of the time slot indicated on the daily classroom schedule; hence, our question: *When is reading?*

This question of *when* naturally precedes the question of *what* and the statement of *it is this*. Suppose someone proposes a theory of reading, a model of some component of reading, a test of reading, a set of reading materials or teaching techniques. The classroom teacher or the

reading specialist must judge the value of what has been proposed. How does one judge? One may compare an old theory, model, test, or instructional packet with the new proposal. In order to compare, however, one must have some actual reading performances as the basis for comparison. The procedure is as follows: 1) examine the new proposal; 2) look at some instances of reading; 3) consider the theory, model, test, or instructional package that you are now using; 4) compare the new proposal to the old account to see which is better; 5) if the new proposal is better, use it; if not, disregard it. We will now turn our attention to step 2 of this procedure.

The transcripts and the videotape show instances of reading, some of them when reading is not expected. To "take some reading" from an elementary school, we used field observations, teachers' questionnaires, and videotapes of children going through their ordinary school days. Intensive study of one day in a first grade classroom reveals the range of reading events depicted in this work.

THE MAIN IDEAS

Now that you have looked at the videotape and/or read through the transcript, it is useful to talk about the main ideas developed on the tape and in the transcripts. There are three basic issues.

Unofficial reading items can be compared with official or designated times for reading learning and reading teaching;

Reading can be seen as a tool;

Opportunities are noted for innovative ways to measure and evaluate reading skills informally.

Unofficial and Official Reading

Reading takes place at many different times during a regular school day. There are times designated specifically for reading learning and reading teaching, in activities such as reading groups, *but*

reading skills are required and/or displayed in many instances outside official reading times and

relatively little reading actually seems to get done during the official reading times.

Often children use a variety of reading strategies outside official reading time, as in the following episode:

> Two boys are reading together before the school day starts. The teacher is sitting nearby.
>
> Peter: *I saw* (pause) *the little* (pause) *puppy big?* Big? Wait a minute.

Carl: Eh, like in Erin. Beg.
Peter: Oh yeah!

In this particular classroom there is a convention that some words are *key* words for learning and remembering short vowel sounds. *Ed*, *Edna*, and *edge* are the key words that the teacher uses for short *e*. Carl uses *Erin* as a key word to help his friend figure out the word *beg*. By using the name of his classmate Erin, Carl shows that he has learned the convention and can manipulate it by substituting another word that fits the same pattern.

Children use decoding strategies learned in official reading time during unofficial reading tasks. These unofficial reading times also show children to be more advanced in their reading development than is evident from teachers' curriculum choices or students' test performances. One child, working alone on a math exercise, says:

The *o* says its name.

as a way of decoding a word on the worksheet he is using. He says the word correctly and repeats:

The *o* says its name.

followed by

What does *K* say?

followed by

What does 4 say?

and

What *does* 4 say?

The discovery he has made seems to amuse him very much. It concerns the fact that although numbers can be written as characters just as letters can, and are part of a symbolic system as are letters, they are inherently different from letters. Although this fact is an important aspect of literacy in our writing system, it may not be dealt with overtly during official reading, and available tests do not measure it.

Observation of reading activities in a first grade classroom reveals that not much actual reading learning or reading teaching goes on during official reading times such as a round-robin reading session. The focus seems to be on social and interactional skills. A great deal of attention is given to the manner in which turns to read are assigned and to the strategies children use to keep their places and follow along.

Reading as a Tool

There is a contrast between official and unofficial reading activities and the *role* of reading during each of them. By looking at times when reading actually occurs during the school day, we

can see that *reading happens when reading is needed*. It is a tool. Children are called upon to read a variety of materials such as menus, recipes, daily schedules, labels, or each other's work. Just as scissors and paste might be the essential tools for an art project, so reading is a necessary tool for the completion of other larger tasks.

It follows that the most useful and productive reading learning can happen when the reading has some concrete purpose. Classroom observation shows that most reading is what might be called "applied reading"—reading that is one part of a larger activity, as opposed to reading that is an end in itself. If reading is viewed as a tool, then it is not at all surprising to see that not much reading seems to get done in official reading groups.

With the idea of reading as a tool, the issue of materials becomes important. What would happen, for example, if materials that *need to be read*, such as menus, recipes, schedules, official forms, labels, or directions, were used in conjunction with official reading materials such as primers or textbooks?

Applied reading highlights comprehension and supplies a motivation for learning and practicing a wide variety of word attack skills. Primers and other official reading programs introduce skills in an order predetermined by theories of subskills and difficulty levels. Major emphasis on overall comprehension often occurs late in these orderings. In applied reading, however, the ordering is tailored to fit the need of the moment. *When* a skill is to be taught and practiced is decided on the spot by considering at least three factors: 1) the demands of the written material, 2) the limits of the independent ability of the children, and 3) the kinds of prompts and clues available to the teacher.

Expanding Evaluation

The issues of official/unofficial reading times and of reading as a tool both have clear implications for the traditional methods of evaluating and measuring children's reading ability. Many of the skills displayed during unofficial reading are never measured by tests. By the same token, the skills on which tests focused (such as the decoding of letter-sound correspondences) may not be the most important skills for most reading.

Taking the view of reading described here, it becomes possible to assess reading ability by simply looking at the *result* of the activity that required reading: Was the activity completed? And successfully? This suggests that teachers create situations where applied reading can serve as a test. For example, to get flour for a recipe, a child would choose from a group of canisters that differ only in their labels.

In the situations on the tape, the applied reading is accomplished cooperatively. The teacher and many children work together to come to an understanding of the texts. Even in these situations, the teacher has an opportunity to evaluate the reading ability of individual children. Which parts of the text were a stumbling block for one child, and for which parts did another child supply assistance? This concrete evidence of strengths and weaknesses may be related to some skill required by that part of the text. Perhaps the child repeatedly stumbles or supplies help when a

particular reading skill is needed. This information is valuable both in assessing ability and in designing materials or activities for the individual child.

In some cases, a child working to read in such a cooperative situation may demonstrate several small component subskills but not the overall skill of combining them to comprehend the material. The child may supply a partially correct reading of a phrase based on predictive comprehension ability and another partially correct reading of the phrase based on word recognition, only to find the two partially correct answers conflicting with one another. The teacher or some other child combines the two and produces the correct reading to resolve the conflict and accomplish the goal of comprehension. For example, in a school very different from the one we are looking at, a little boy couldn't read *street*. First he tried *slide* and then he tried *road*. His classmates took the partially correct letter sound correspondence from *slide* and the partially correct meaning clue from *road* and read the word correctly as *street*.

In other cases, a child may control some larger skill and may display it in a cooperative situation for the teacher to evaluate. For example, beginning readers working alone read stories with very little plot or character development and often with little, if any, literary merit. When the teacher is reading aloud to them, children then can show how well they use inferences from the content and form of the story to assist in predictive comprehension of a well-structured story. In these situations, children also display their particular strengths or weaknesses with respect to the conventions of various literary styles and to the appreciation and criticism of literature.

Teachers can take advantage of the expanded opportunities for evaluation that applied or unofficial reading events provide. They can locate (and capitalize on) the various skills that students display coincidentally as they are trying to comprehend written text. Teachers might "teach to" the naturally occurring "tests" that they and their students encounter as they read to find out what they are going to eat for lunch or how to make bread, or when they read just to relax.

SPECIFIC READING EVENTS

Tape Segment #1

8:30 a.m. The Menu: Functional Word Attack

One activity that took place in many classes was the reading of the daily lunch menu. Although the reading of the menu is not designated as official reading time, the skills required for this activity are reading skills. Consider the following exchange:

T: Can you find that? Follow down under Wednesday.

J: Vegetable soup. Rat beef/pause/Sand

T: There are abbreviations there. What do you suppose sand
J: [stands for?
Sandwiches.]

The particular reading skill required to figure out abbreviations is not one that is usually treated during official reading time in first grade. The segment of tape shows that children often have skills that they are rarely required to display formally. There is much to be learned about abbreviations: witness the rather lengthly discussion concerning the abbreviation of *roast* to *rat*. Although abbreviations may be based on the "common sense" omission of certain letters, frequently leaving a combination that resembles the original word, they also may be formed arbitrarily. Roast, for example, could just as well be abbreviated to *rst*. or even *r*., given its occurrence with *beef*.

This common sense, arbitrary nature of abbreviations raises two further points: the importance of context and the limitations of letter-sound decoding. First, if the abbreviation were *rst*. or *r. beef sand*., the proficient readers would probably have no difficulty interpreting the *r*. as *roast*. They bring to the reading the knowledge that there exists such a thing as roast beef, such a thing as a roast beef sandwich, that the latter is not uncommon lunch fare in the United States, and so on. That is, the readers bring their knowledge of the real world to the reading experience. Because of this knowledge, i.e. that *roast* and *beef* may occur *in context* together, the readers would probably find it quite reasonable for the word *roast* to occur abbreviated as *r*. or *rst*..

Second, as we have said, the reading that occurs in unofficial reading times often exercises or displays skills not dealt with in official times. It is also true that skills focused on in official reading events may be practically useless in other situations. In the case of abbreviations, a letter-sound correspondence approach to decoding would not be sufficient. The phonetic resemblance between *roast* and *rat*. or *r*. will only partially help the speaker figure out what *rat*. stands for.

Later in the day the children and teacher again encounter conventional abbreviations when they start to make bread. Consider the various conventional abbreviations for *tablespoon* and for *teaspoon*. If you saw them outside of the context of cooking, would it be as easy to figure them out? If they had been used in the above sentence would it have been appropriate? Some of the abbreviations have a phonetic relationship to both words, and we rely on our knowledge of the convention being used to determine whether to put in a teaspoon or a tablespoon. The children's work with idiosyncratic arbitrary abbreviations seems to be of help in developing their general understanding of conventional arbitrary abbreviations.

Tape Segment #2

9:30 a.m. The Recipe: Functional Word Attack

Reading in English generally requires the reader to approach the printed page from left to right and from top to bottom. In using a recipe, students are confronted with changes in approaching the print due to difference in format. Once again, abbreviations appear, and comprehension

abilities often neglected in official reading events are required and demonstrated. In the first utterance, for example, the child shows that she has not understood the meaning or the purpose of the sentences she has read. The intonation and the stress with which she reads the sentence

Put in a mixing bowl.

makes it sound as though one of the recipe's ingredients is a mixing bowl. The teacher's utterance serves to correct the miscomprehension:

Tell us *what* we're going to *put* in the mixing bowl

While "reading with expression" is highly valued in some official reading events, the connection between intonation and comprehension is seldom as clear as it is here. While children usually are expected to read a whole sentence in a reading primer, there is rarely as urgent a need to as there is here. The teacher uses comprehension requirements as the basis for correction and prompting.

Later on in this sequence, Julie misreads the word *thoroughly* but shows in her definition ("through the whole thing") that she knows what the word means. This case illustrates rather dramatically that understanding what is being read is not necessarily related to letter-sound decoding, and that comprehension is clearly possible without accurate pronunciation. In fact, Sophia, the child who correctly reads *thoroughly*, gives *softly* as a definition.

The correct and incorrect explanation for *thoroughly* are both derived from its use in context: the teacher asks for the meaning by putting the word in its place as a modifier of the verb *to beat*, and all of the children respond with words that are reasonable modifiers of *to beat*. The child who decoded correctly is the farthest off track; given that its larger context is cooking, *beating softly* is unlikely to be a correct reading. Often in official beginning reading events, correct or incorrect decoding is closely attended to while comprehension is treated secondarily or ignored. Sophia might not get the help she needs, and Julie might not get the chance to give it to her.

The sequence about the meaning of *lukewarm* is part of a lengthy discussion that extended throughout the day and included having the children feel lukewarm milk on their wrists. Some of them tried using the word in unrelated conversation and in new context. The children essentially learned the meaning of *lukewarm* by "doing" or "experiencing it," an approach to word knowledge or vocabulary building different than the kind usually found in official reading events when there is not enough time for this kind of work. Learning new words from reading is as valuable as learning to read already known words, but is a life-time skill that teachers seldom have chance to encourage in official reading events.

Tape Segment #3

11:30 a.m. The Reading Group: Social Work and Decoding

This section of the tape and transcript illustrates that sometimes not much reading goes on in

reading groups. The children are seated around a table with their readers open in front of them. They are expected to take turns reading successive passages, and their attention seems focused mostly on keeping track of when their next turn occurs. They do this by listening or watching. In an instance when Grant loses his place, he is admonished as follows:

> T: Did you *listen* to what Mark just read? . . . were you watching me writing instead of *watching* the book, 'cause I turned my page late. And you turned yours when I did. *You need to watch the children who are reading.*

The skills called into play here are interactional ones: It is important to know how the turn-taking works, so as to be in the right place at the right time. Comprehending and following the plot do not tell the children where to begin their turn, and keeping up with the word attacks does not matter. It is watching the other children and listening to them that supply the cues that Grant misses.

Is it the social nature of the reading group that allows only the reading of short, somewhat disconnected passages? In thinking about the reading group as a social event, one would consider, for example, the different status relationships between the children and between the teacher and the children. Evidence for these relationships is seen in the following sequence, where Mark clearly has assumed the authority to monitor the progress of the group:

(1) Grant: I'm trying to find the page.
Mark: Where your marker is.
Grant: I know.

(2) Gene: I read the
T: Ssh.
Laura: (reading)
Mark: There's a space in there. There's a space in there (pointing out a mistake in her reading)
T: That's right.

These conversations emphasize the social work associated with a reading group. In this case, the teacher has many opportunities to notice Grant's inattentiveness and problems in small group interactions with his peers. Since he misses several turns to read, his reading strengths and weaknesses are rarely displayed for the teacher to evaluate.

Nonetheless, during this same conversation, the teacher does have two opportunities to hear Grant read. In the first instance, the teacher uses a comprehension-type prompt to help Grant start reading a line: *Who is Dan talking to? What do you think*. . . . She is helping Grant to use the on-going story to figure out a word. It is reasonable to expect *father* would be in this sentence

because that is to whom Dan is talking and this sentence is probably a reply to what Dan said. The clue is successful. However, the teacher uses another comprehension-type prompt that fails. Again she calls on Grant to predict from his sense of the on-going story *(Think what it would say)* and she helps by giving the "sentence-so-far" a less halting intonation than Grant had produced. This time she does not follow through with Grant. The close relationship of official reading times and letter-sound correspondence strategies enables Gene to cut in. Gene supplies the word and refers to one of the letter-sound rules *(Away. The **a** says its name.)* Gene chooses just the type of word attack skill that the official event favors. In a sense, the teacher's use of comprehension-type clues was out of place here. She more than makes up for her breach with her enthusiasm: She goes along with Gene's rule and with Gene's unusual (reading) pronunciation of *away—Two **a's** say their names.* Grant's reading gets lost in the official event; in the same way, comprehension word attack skills are lost in the official event.

Remembering the view of reading as a *tool*, we should not expect much reading for comprehension to get done in these official events. It is also unlikely that comprehension-type prompts would occur very often. In reading groups, the teaching and learning of reading skills are removed or abstracted from situations in which those same skills are useful as tools. Other elementary school academic topics recently have imported some of the practical matters in everyday life into the curricula and capitalized on the use of manipulable objects as an aid to learning. Reading in unofficial events automatically includes these factors, but official reading events exclude them almost as a matter of policy. A limited set of abstract skills is highlighted instead.

Furthermore, since reading groups are inevitably social gatherings, the focus shifts from reading skills to interactional skills. Although social interaction is an integral part of schooling, the information teachers need to have about a child's reading ability must also be considered. Reading groups are not the only (and probably not the best) place for a teacher to find out about reading.

Tape Segment #4

2 p.m. The North Wind Story: Comprehension and Prediction

T: (reading) . . . *it will hit until you say 'Stop, stick, stop'.* (T shows pictures)

Pupil 1: Hit what?

Pupil 2: Hit him.

Pupil 3: Hit the innkeeper.

T: Think so?

Pupil 3: Yeah.

The children are correct to assume that the innkeeper will be hit. But how do they know? The teacher is the one doing the reading; the pictures that she shows to the children are retrospective, depicting what has just been read, not what is about to happen. What reading teaching or learning is going on here? The three-part structure of the story is clear: Peter makes three trips to the North Wind and has discussions with three different "people" during the first two trips—the North Wind, the innkeeper, his mother. The innkeeper switched an ordinary cloth and an ordinary goat for the magic ones on the first two trips; this fact is known to the reader but not to Peter. Peter only knows that when he tries to demonstrate the magic to his mother at the end of each trip, it doesn't work.

Reading aloud contrasts with official reading group situations in many ways. A first glance suggests that reading aloud times are essentially nonacademic parts of the day. They occur almost as fillers around or during transitions, as with this North Wind story, which is read just before the children go home. The children are more or less sprawled on the floor, some resting on the others' bodies, giving the atmosphere of a bedtime story. The stories that are read during these situations are longer, more interesting, and more likely to be recognized as literature than those that are read during reading groups. The reading is divided into "chunks," but the pieces of connected text are much larger than the one or two sentences that characterize the first grade reading groups. The children ask questions and answer each other's questions, and their talk involves comprehension of the story. In the official reading group situations, the children's talk encompassed turns and their places on the printed page, but not comprehension.

There are many kinds of literacy skills exercised in these events, as the North Wind story demonstrates to a careful observer. Some important parts of this event are not shown on the tape and are not transcribed. The story was started earlier in the day. When this reading session begins, the teacher has a chance to ask the children to summarize the plot and to discuss the characters. In this way she can evaluate their comprehension and reporting skills. This activity of summarizing plot and discussing characters seldom occurs in official reading events, particularly not with children who are below average in reading. (One of the children, temporarily in a high ability group, responded to the rare occurrence of summation-type questions by saying impatiently, "What is this? Reading time or sharing time?")

Throughout this reading event, the teacher reads a segment of the story then pauses to show a picture. At this signal, the children start to talk. Much of their talk can be characterized as guesses about what is going to happen, based on the plot and story structure so far revealed. For instance, at the beginning of the taped segment the following occurs: Peter has been given the magic cloth; the innkeeper has replaced it with an ordinary one; Peter tells his mother the magic cloth will give food; his mother tells him to show her; Peter tries, saying, "Cloth give me food." At this point the reading stops and a child says, "It didn't." The child knows that the switching of the cloth is the basis for a good hypothesis, not Peter's mistaken faith.

It will be many years before these children know the name for the "omniscient narrator," but already they are practicing the proficient reader's response to this literary device. (Other stories

29

read aloud to them demand that they do not generalize and expect this device on every occasion.) Neither the predictive guessing nor the ability to respond to these literary devices is typically taught or tested during official reading events.

On the tape is another example of proficient predictive guessing. Here the hypothesis is based on story structure, plot development, and character development. We are referring here to the "hit the innkeeper" segment. The story structure suggests that a stop at the inn follows the visit to the North Wind; the plot development suggests that the punishment by the stick is to be related to some resolution of the conflict between Peter and the innkeeper; the character development suggests that the one deserving punishment is the innkeeper. Since there are multiple and redundant clues, we might say that, of course, the children "know." Yet these are the very same children who had trouble in reading group knowing where they were in the story, and these are the same teacher and students who seldom used comprehension-based cues during official reading events.

Another aspect of the children's ability that is displayed in this segment is their orientation to the unusual language used in written material. "Hit, stick, hit" is unusual in several respects. Using a vocative while referring to an inanimate object is uncommon—it would be "funny" to say "Move, sofa" when rearranging the furniture. Placing that vocative between repeated forms of the imperative is also unusual; finding it at the beginning or the end is more common. Finally, following a transitive verb like *hit*, we expect to find a word referring to the object that is to be hit, not a word referring to the instrument that is to do the hitting. Of course, the unusual language coincides with facts unusual in the story's "everyday" world: magic words and the magic stick perform the action, not a person's body movements.

The children display no difficulty in dealing with the magic, but they do display difficulty with the language. The "Hit what?" calls our attention to the missing object and to the fact that the children were not misled into thinking that the stick was the object. Later, toward the end, a child indicates both the difficulty of the language and that this difficulty has been overcome: "Stick, hit, hit" keeps all the words of the magic incantation but regularizes it into the usual placement of the vocative in the first position. Children who are understanding what they are reading often read aloud *not* what is printed but their everyday language or dialect version of what is printed.

In reading aloud situations, children are exposed to the conventions and language of written material that they might not be able to read themselves. Also, the teacher can assess the children's progress on aspects of literacy development that either do not occur in official reading events or are not available for the teacher to notice. These possibilities are important additions to the reading learning and teaching which happen while the children are faced with a printed page.

EXERCISES

The following set of exercises is divided into two sections. In the first one, the exercises are based directly on the tape and transcript. The second section, Summary Exercises, consists of a general set of activities. In both sections, the exercises may be done independently or as assignments in either a workshop or a class setting. While the exercises are designed to be adapted to different workshop or class formats, many of the exercises are best done with pencil and paper and a tape recorder.

The general purpose of these exercises is to focus and refine your understanding of the topic at hand, both through *observation* and *discussion* of the tape segments and through *application* of what is learned from these observations and discussions. It is *not* the purpose of the exercises to elicit criticism of the behavior of the children or the teachers seen on the tape.

I. EXERCISES BASED ON TAPE AND TRANSCRIPT MATERIAL

A. 8:30 a.m. The Menu: Functional Word Attack

(1) Examine the transcript for this section of the tape.
- ☐ Discuss why the menu reading activity is included as part of the day's activities.
- ☐ Discuss whether or not reading is one focus (or even the major focus) of the activity, and why.

(2) Discuss this transcript in terms of an instance of reading instruction.
- ☐ What, for example, are the reading skills highlighted in this sequence?
- ☐ Is the language being decoded different from the language found in materials designed for classroom reading instruction? If so, how should one deal with the particular kind of language found in the menu?

(3) Concentrate on one child in the segment. What does this segment tell you and make you want to know about his or her reading ability?

(4) Jot down a list of everyday activities that require reading skills — the list might include place names on buses, menus in restaurants, *push* or *pull* signs on doors, street signs,

and the like. Discuss the list along the following lines:

- ☐ Which activities can be accomplished without being able to read?
- ☐ What alternative methods are used to provide a nonreader with the same information?
- ☐ Which activities on the list absolutely require reading?

(5) Bring copies of a restaurant menu and of some timetables (e.g. train schedules) to your workshop or class.

- ☐ Discuss the ways in which you can read these materials, and how each differs from the ways you might read a novel or a newspaper.
- ☐ Discuss the language of the menu in terms of its particular features. (Are definite or indefinite articles used? How are adjectives used? How is the user of the menu addressed?) Notice, for example, the importance of knowing that cooked food is the "topic" and a restaurant is the setting.
- ☐ Discuss the language of the timetables in terms of their particular features. (Does the heading help? What aspects of "prose reading" remain? What new printed signals do you have to decode? How do you know what a "whole sentence" is on a chart?)
- ☐ For each piece of material note:
  - —What kinds of abbreviations, if any, are used?
  - — Is it organized spatially in a particular way, and is the reader expected to read the different sections in a specific order?
  - — What kind of information is the reader expected to know already, which therefore may be excluded from the menu?
  - — Is there any information that seems redundant?

(6) Design two or three classroom reading activities based on a menu or a schedule or some other written texts that are not essays or stories.

(7) Think about how these materials might be used specifically for the *evaluation* of reading ability and how a social situation might be engineered to create a reading test for an individual child — for example, setting up a role play situation in which a student assumes the part of "customer," another as "waiter," and so forth.

B. 9:30 a.m. The Recipe: Functional Word Attack

(1) Examine this portion of the transcript.

- ☐ Discuss what the point of the recipe reading activity is. That is, why has the teacher included it as part of the day's activities?
- ☐ Discuss whether or not reading is one focus, or even the major focus, of the activity and why.

(2) Discuss this transcript as an instance of reading instruction.
- ☐ What are the reading skills highlighted in this sequence?
- ☐ Is the language being decoded in the recipe different from the language found in classroom materials designed for reading instruction? If so, how should one deal with this particular kind of language?

(3) Concentrate on one child in the segment. What does this segment tell you and make you want to know about his or her reading ability?

(4) Bring copies of some recipes to your workshop or class.
- ☐ Make note the steps you take in reading them. For example, do you read certain sections before you read others, or do you read the whole thing through once? What is the order in which you read the different parts?
- ☐ Rearrange one of the recipes according to the order in which you read the different parts. Discuss why it is that recipes are not always written in the order that people read them. Should they be? Why or why not?

(5) Discuss the language used in the recipe.
- ☐ Is it characterized by any special features, such as special vocabulary or recurring grammatical forms? How is the user of the recipe addressed?
- ☐ What kinds of abbreviations are used?
- ☐ What kinds of information is the user of a recipe expected to know — information that is therefore excluded from the recipe? Is there any information that you find redundant?

(6) Explain to someone else how to cook a favorite dish for which you do not have the actual recipe. Tape-record and transcribe this explanation and compare the language used in written recipes to the language you used. Consider at what point the ingredients are mentioned, what types of work the voice and body do, and how working from a "spoken" recipe might differ from working with a written recipe.

(7) Design two or three classroom activities based on the use of recipes or other kinds of written material that give procedural directions, such as putting toys together or playing a game.

(8) Think about how materials like these might be used specifically for *evaluation* of reading ability and how a social situation might be engineered to create a reading test for an individual child — for example, setting up a role play situation in which students assume the parts of "cook" and "cook's helper."

C. 11:30 a.m. *The Reading Group: Social Work and Decoding*

(1) Examine this section of the transcript.

- ☐ Mark every instance of actual *reading* that occurs. This can be done by putting an arrow next to the speaker doing the reading. It may be revealing to assign a letter to each child and to number each reading turn sequentially

  A1. Mark:
  B1. Joan:
  A2. Mark:

- ☐ Compare the instances of reading to the instances of speaking.
- ☐ Can the teacher's utterances be grouped in any way or described as doing any particular types of work?
- ☐ What about the work of the children's utterances?

(2) Examine the transcript and/or look at the tape. Note:

- ☐ How turns to read are assigned.
- ☐ What kind of language occurs when one child finishes a turn and before the next child begins.
- ☐ What kind of language occurs and what happens when this transition between turns is not as smooth as it could be or when the turn-taking process begins to break down.
- ☐ How some children in this group seem to assume more responsibility than others for assigning reading turns. Is this responsibility seen in the language they use?
- ☐ What the appropriate behavior in this reading group is. Is it enough to have certain reading skills or are certain interactional skills brought into play as well? If so, how would you describe them?

(3) Observe a reading group or an activity designated as official reading time. (Tape-record if possible.) Make note of how much each child reads, how turns at reading are designated, what children do when they are not reading, and what the teacher's role is. Is comprehension discussed; is comprehension used to assist in word attack?

(4) Observe a classroom and note all the activities during a school day that require reading.

(5) Have a few colleagues list all the different times during the day or week that formal reading instruction takes place in their classrooms. Compare this list to the list made in exercise 4. Are there any similarities or overlaps between the two lists? Are comprehension and other word attack skills separated in these two lists?

D. 2 p.m. The North Wind Story: Comprehension and Prediction

(1) Examine the transcript, looking particularly at instances when the children interrupt the story.

- ☐ Do any or all of these interruptions share common features? For instance, what do the children say about the story during these interruptions? When do they choose to interrupt? How do they interrupt?
- ☐ Are any reading skills shown during these interruptions? If so, how can they be described?
- ☐ Are there any social or interactional skills displayed during these interruptions? If so, how can they be described?
- ☐ Is reading a story out-loud to children a useful classroom activity? Why?

(2) Concentrate on one child in the segment. What does this segment tell you and make you want to know about his or her reading abilities?

(3) Divide into groups of three or four. Each group should have a two-page newspaper article. One group member should read the article aloud, stopping two or three times during the reading. Tape-record these sessions and note any interruptions or comments by the listeners. Examine the interruptions or comments and discuss the ways they are related to the reading of the article. Do they reveal anything, for example, about the listener's comprehension of the article? Do they reveal anything about the differences between the way beginning readers behave during oral reading and the way adults do?

(4) Are there times when adults predict outcomes of narratives — for example, of a television program, during a commercial, or of a novel you decide to put down rather than finish? Do these have anything in common with the children's reactions in this segment? Is there a place where "guessing" is likely to occur? What are the pieces of information that allow one to guess? What does the guess show that you know?

II. SUMMARY EXERCISES

(1) Compare the four sections of the tape in order to identify:

- ☐ Which skills are focused on in C (the reading group).
- ☐ Which skills are needed in the menu and recipe sections (A & B).
- ☐ Which skills are demonstrated in D (the story-reading).

Identify and discuss where and when reading instruction takes place in your classrooms (for in-service teachers), or when and where it should take place (for pre-service teachers).

(2) Explore your beliefs and attitudes about reading.

- ☐ How does one "attack" a printed page (in what direction, where, etc.)?
- ☐ What is comprehension?
- ☐ How hard is it to learn to read?

(3) Identify a good reader and a poor reader in your class. Write a description of each child's reading strengths and weaknesses. Tape-record each of these readers as they describe to fellow class members:

- ☐ What it is they do in school.
- ☐ What it is they do during official reading time.
- ☐ When else they read.

Are any specific reading skills mentioned in either description? Do the skills mentioned reveal anything about the child's ability as a reader?

(4) Observe each of the children identified above in a variety of official and unofficial reading situations. Does the child's actual reading fit the description you have written or the description that the child may have provided? Why are there discrepancies? What changes in instructional or assessment practices seem appropriate?

(5) Consider practical ways for teachers to remember and make use of the informal evaluation opportunities that arise in applied reading situations. Consider possible record-keeping devices for both formal and informal evaluations. What could be the instructional consequences of those evaluations? How can informal and formal evaluation be blended to assess a student's reading ability more accurately?

(6) Keep track of everyday situations requiring reading skills. Discuss the examples collected, especially the situations for which reading skills are indispensable. Is it necessary or even wise to postpone various applied reading situations until children know the "basics"?

(7) Consider literary conventions and unusual written language, such as poetry and play scripts. What skills or problems do children have that we seldom notice with regard to unusual written language?

(8) Collect some good children's literature. Construct a series of activities where the material read aloud will encourage the children to respond effectively to contrasting types of literary conventions and common kinds of *written* language structures.

(9) Think about how this literature specifically might be used for evaluation of reading ability and how a social situation might be engineered to create a reading test for an individual child.

THEORETICAL ISSUES

As mentioned in the introduction, much of the research on reading carries with it the implicit statement *This is what reading is* or the question *What is reading?* The following pages will provide the reader with some background on the major issues in reading research.

The Nature of Reading

Researchers in reading seem to agree that reading is a general process of going from print to meaning. Sharp differences arise, however, when researchers attempt to define the various skills comprising that process. The precise way in which linguistic skills are applied in the reading process is still not a settled issue. Central aspects of this controversy concern the nature of decoding and its role in the reading process. Let's examine some of these controversies.

A Parallel Model and the Role of Decoding

A *parallel model* hypothesizes that readers apply strategies to derive meaning from print that are parallel to those applied in understanding spoken language.[1] Kenneth Goodman, a proponent of this approach, argues against overusing decoding (Shuy, 1977). He proposes that proficient reading is a process of prediction and sampling of written text. In reading a text, a fluent reader makes predictions about what words or expressions will be found there. These predictions are based on the text that the reader has already read, on his knowledge of the redundancy and systematicity present in language, and on his prior knowledge of the topic of the text. The reader samples from the printed text in order to check these predictions, to determine how these expectations about the content of the text match the text itself. In the words of Frank Smith:

> A fluent reader provides much more information to reduce uncertainty from his own store of knowledge about redundancy in the language than he acquires from the text. More alternatives are eliminated by what he knows about the nature of language than by the actual visual information that he gets from the page. (1971: 221)

The psychological research on visual perception in reading indicates that the reader's knowledge and expectations are important not just for comprehension of what is read, but also for the very basic process of perceiving the letters and words that are printed on the page. Neisser (1967, Chapter 5) and Smith and Holmes (1971) review the research on perception as it relates to reading; Smith (1971) develops a model of reading based on this work.

Some reading theorists draw on this same visual perception research to support the following model. In obtaining meaning from print—the essential task in reading—readers apply processing strategies that are quite similar to those they apply in obtaining meaning from sound when listening to speech. In this view, the principal difference between understanding written language and

understanding spoken language is that in one case linguistic processing strategies are applied to the graphic representation, while in the other case they are applied to the auditory representation. Furthermore, linguistic processing is applied directly to the graphically represented language as it appears on the page and not to a mentally preconstructed phonological (sound) representation corresponding to that printed language.

This model de-emphasizes the role of *decoding* in reading. Theorists supporting this model argue that readers do *not* first translate printed language into a corresponding phonological representation—a sort of silent representation of speech—and then apply their linguistic skills to the task of understanding that silent speech. Rather, they claim, readers apply their linguistic skills directly to the printed language.

Decoding might be characterized as a precise and somewhat mechanical process of perceiving print and translating it into phonological representation. Given this notion of decoding, the research on visual perception of linguistic material provides some support for the claim that printed language is processed directly. If a reader's linguistic and factual knowledge play a part in the very perception of print, then decoding (viewed as a mechanical process of visual perception and translation of print) cannot constitute an independent initial step in reading. A reader's interpretation of the previous text and expectations about the upcoming text have effects down to the very lowest level: the perception of the words and letters on the page. Therefore, argue these theorists, decoding print into sound cannot constitute the initial step in the process of obtaining meaning from written language. Linguistic processing strategies must be applied directly to graphic representation, not to a corresponding phonological representation derived from the print independent of any higher level linguistic processing.

Goodman and Goodman (1977) support another reading model in which the linguistic knowledge and processing strategies used in understanding spoken language are applied directly to print. Decoding, the translation of print to sound or phonological representation, does *not* intervene in this process. As they put it:

> Since the deep structure and rules for generating the surface structure are the same for both language modes, people learning to read may draw on their control of the rules and syntax of oral language to facilitate developing proficiency in written language. This is not a matter of translating or recoding print to sound and then treating it as a listening task. Rather, it is a matter of readers using their knowledge of language and their conceptualizations to get meaning from print, to develop the sampling, predicting, confirming, and correcting strategies parallel to those they use in listening. (p. 323)

The Dependent Model and the Role of Decoding

Some researchers have opposed the parallel model characterized above, claiming that reading for comprehension is not a matter of applying linguistic processing strategies directly to printed

language. This group argues, *contra* Smith and the Goodmans, that fluent readers translate the graphic representation of printed language into a corresponding internal phonological representation—what Conrad (1972) has called a sort of inner "silent speech." Readers then apply the strategies and techniques that they ordinarily use to understand spoken language to the task of understanding this "silent speech."

In comparison with the parallel model of reading, this view stresses the importance of decoding in the reading process: the role of decoding is to make the initial translation from graphic to phonological representation, which allows the reader to apply his linguistic processing skills to the task of reading comprehension. This model stresses the importance of decoding as a component of fluent reading skills. The importance of teaching children to be good decoders in learning to read follows naturally.

In models of this type, reading comprehension is in a sense *dependent* on oral language processing skills. Proponents argue as follows: as a proficient native speaker of a language (say, English), a person controls all the knowledge, skills, and strategies needed to understand spoken English. In reading printed English, this person must translate the graphically represented language of the text into some representation that it will have in common with spoken language. The reader then will be able to apply well-learned listening skills to the problem of processing and understanding the written text. Oral language processing skills are primary. The task in reading is to get the written text into a form in which it is susceptible to the ordinary application of those skills. This is the role of decoding: to translate from a graphic representation to some internal linguistic representation that can be processed as if it had originally been an oral message. A very succinct statement of the reasoning behind dependent models is offered by Halwes:

> It seems like a good bet that since you have all this apparatus in the head for understanding language that if you wanted to teach somebody to read, you would arrange a way to get the written material input to the system that you have already got for processing spoken language and at as low a level as you could arrange to do that, then let the processing of the written material be done by the mechanisms that are already in there.[2]

Evidence cited in favor of a dependent model of reading consists largely of experimental results showing phonological recoding. Typically in such experiments, subjects are required to perceive and respond to printed linguistic stimuli. Under these conditions, the subjects' performance frequently shows that they "translate" the print into a phonological representation—one step in the process of understanding the stimuli and performing the manipulations required by the experiment. In one type of investigation, printed words and letters are presented visually, to be remembered and repeated. Such experiments consistently show that subjects' memory errors tend to involve phonological confusions rather than confusions based on the visual shape of the words of letters. Proponents often argue that since our primary access to our internal vocabulary (i.e. in oral speech perception) is through phonological representation, it is more efficient in reading to translate graphic information into phonological representation. We therefore use the

already existing phonological access system, rather than trying to establish a second, visual access system to the internal vocabulary.

Other Views of the Relationship Between Reading and Decoding

The research offers evidence for some form of decoding from written to phonological representation as a typical part of the reading process. An extreme version of this view, might suggest that decoding is *autonomous*, i.e. decoding would constitute the initial step of reading and would be accomplished simply by applying a symbol-to-sound code or visual word recognition skills. The higher level linguistic skills, such as knowledge of the language, prior knowledge of the subject of the text, and reasoning ability, would play no part in the initial decoding step.

None of the researchers reviewed here defends this view of decoding as an autonomous activity. In fact, it seems that no current reading theorist espouses the notion that decoding is independent of and unaffected by the reader's linguistic knowledge and expectations about the content of the text. For example, LaBerge (1972) supports the central claim of phonological recoding of written material, but he argues that in a naturalistic reading context, visual processing strategies and linguistic expectations play a role in the decoding step. Gleitman and Rozin (1973) disclaim letter-by-letter decoding in fluent reading and suggest that the proficient reader simultaneously makes use of cues from many levels in translating visual input into phonological representation. Shankweiler and Liberman (1972) concur in this view, describing their position as follows:

> We do not assume that the reader is tied to a rigid hierarchy of successive processing stages. Rather, we suppose that the transformation of script into speech occurs at a number of levels concurrently and in parallel.

Finally, Perfetti and Hogaboam (1975) argue that decoding is an important aspect of proficient reading and is typically a problem for poor readers. They also allow that the decoding of written representation into an oral language code is not necessarily a singular process and might involve the use of language skills beyond knowledge of symbol-sound correspondence or visual word-recognition ability.

While everyone seems to agree that decoding is not an autonomous process in fluent reading, many theorists stress that it can or must be taught as a separate skill to children learning to read. Gleitman and Rozin (1973) argue that reading, like other complex skills, is appropriately broken down into component subskills for the purpose of teaching. This is not to say that the reader, as skill improves, should continue to focus on, or even remain consciously aware of, component subskills such as decoding. Component skills are finally ". . . brought together into unified and automated 'chunks' . . ." (Gleitman and Rozin, 1973:497).

Several researchers maintain that the goal of decoding skill (and decoding instruction) is for the decoding process to sink below the level of conscious awareness, to become automatic, so that it will not distract the reader's attention from higher level tasks such as syntactic (grammatical) and

semantic (meaning) processing of the text. Perfetti and Hogaboam (1975) compared good and poor readers experimentally and interpreted their results as showing that some unskilled readers do not decode automatically. They suggest that the amount of attention and processing capacity that these poor readers must expend on decoding interferes with higher level processing capabilities and leads to comprehension difficulties. LaBerge and Samuels (1974) argue that the efficient performance of any complex skill requires automatization of some subskills to reduce the cognitive load required to accomplish a complex task. They describe research on how subjects learn automaticity in a visual discrimination task, and they suggest that some words might be recognized automatically in the visual system, while others are recognized via a translation into phonological representation.

Biemiller (1973) compared oral reading speed of linguistic materials in and out of context for good and poor readers. Good readers, in this view, are able to process text in parallel—performing linguistic operations on earlier text while visually recognizing and decoding what comes later. Poor readers are slower at recognizing and reading print, independent of contextual processing ability. Their slower performance might be due to reading in strict sequential fashion, unit by unit. In other words, poor readers are tied to processing earlier chunks of text before they can begin to perceive later ones.

Summary

In summary, a *parallel* model holds that in deriving meaning from printed language, we apply strategies that are parallel to those we apply in understanding spoken language. The principal difference between linguistic processing in the two modes is that, in one case, we apply our processing skills and strategies to sound and in the other case to print. In this view we do not, generally speaking, translate print into speech and then interpret that speech. A *dependent* model, on the other hand, states that the ability to process and understand written text is dependent on oral language processing abilities. Here, decoding is a crucial component in the reading process. In normal reading we must (or at least customarily *do*) translate printed language into a corresponding phonological representation, to which we can then apply all the processing skills that we ordinarily use in understanding spoken language. In this view we do not have to learn to apply our oral language skills visually to written language; rather, we have to learn to render written language into a form to which we can apply our oral language skills.

Educational Consequences

The difference between these two positions has some serious educational consequences when we consider reading problems and the possible sources of those problems. With a **dependent model,** where linguistic processing of written and spoken language involves the same skills applied to the same kind of input (phonological representation), a child's problems in reading and learning to read can never derive fundamentally from difficulties in higher level linguistic processing per se. That is, a child who can deal with a particular structure or expression in oral speech

also should be able to deal with it in written representation, at least as far as linguistic processing itself is concerned. For those children who appear to be having trouble with higher level processing in their reading, the real source of problems is either difficulty in decoding or a language problem. With the former, a child might expend so much effort and attention on decoding that none is left over for the linguistic processing of what has been decoded. With the latter, a child who has trouble dealing with a particular language processing task in reading might simply be having problems with that task overall, in the processing of spoken as well as written language.

On the other hand, under a **parallel model,** higher level processing can itself be the source of problems in reading and learning to read. If the linguistic processing of written language requires us to learn how to apply our higher level linguistic skills to a visual representation of language, then we have no guarantee that such skills—learned for and applied to oral language—will automatically transfer to the processing of language in the written mode. For example, words that are immediately identifiable when spoken would have to be learned visually. Until we learn how to apply them to visual as well as to oral input, strategies for handling particular spoken linguistic structures might not be available when those structures appear in print. Under a parallel model, reading problems then can stem from difficulties in higher level processing per se, independent of decoding skill and independent of whether corresponding problems appear in the processing of oral language.

The two opposing models of the reading process make opposing predictions about the source of problems in reading and learning to read. In addition, the position one takes concerning the source of reading problems will affect both reading assessment and reading instruction.

The preceding discussion should give manual users some idea of the issues in reading research. As indicated in the discussion and exercises in this manual, we contend that crucial aspects of the nature of reading might be understood by looking at *when* reading occurs. This appears to be in contrast with approaches that start out by saying *This is what reading is* or by asking *What is reading?*

---

[1] In the preparation of these theory pages, the authors made extensive use of *Theoretical Considerations in the Revision and Extension of Miscue Analysis*, prepared by Thomas Dieterich, Don Larkin, Cecilia Freeman, and Nancy Yanofsky of the Center for Applied Linguistics for the Department of Instructional Planning and Development, Montgomery County Public Schools, Rockville, Md., January 1979.

[2] Quoted in D. Shankweiler and I. Liberman, "Exploring the Relations between Reading and Speech," presented at the Conference on the Neuropsychology of Learning Disabilities, Korso, Denmark, 1975.

References

Biemiller, Andrew. *Relationships between Oral Reading Rates for Letters, Words, and Simple Text, and the Development of Reading Ability*. Sponsored by Ontario Educational Research Council, Toronto, Ont., 1973. ERIC document ED 092 911

Conrad, R. "Speech and Reading." In J. F. Kavanagh and I. G. Mattingly, eds., *Language by Ear and by Eye: The Relationship between Speech and Reading*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1972

Gleitman, Lila R. and Paul Rozin. "Teaching Reading by Use of a Syllabary." *Reading Research Quarterly* 8, No. 4, 1973

Goodman, Kenneth S. "Reading: A Psycholinguistic Guessing Game." In Doris V. Gunderson, ed., *Language and Reading: An Interdiscip'inary Approach*. Washington, D.C.: The Center for Applied Linguistics, 1970

_____ and Yetta N. Goodman. "Learning about Psycholinguistic Processes by Analyzing Oral Reading." *Harvard Educational Review* 47, No. 3, 1977

LaBerge, David. "Beyond Auditory Decoding." In Kavanagh and Mattingly, eds., 1972

LaBerge, David and S. J. Samuels. "Toward a Theory of Automatic Information Processing in Reading." *Cognitive Psychology* 6: 293-323, 1974

Neisser, Ulrich. *Cognitive Psychology*. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1967

Perfetti, Charles A. and Thomas Hogaboam. "Relationship Between Single Word Decoding and Reading Comprehension Skill." *Journal of Educational Psychology* 67, No. 4, 1975

Shankweiler, Donald and Isabelle Y. Liberman. "Misreading: A Search for Causes." In Kavanagh and Mattingly, eds., 1972

Shuy, Roger W., ed. *Linguistic Theory: What Can It Say about Reading?* Newark, Del.: International Reading Association, 1977

Smith, Frank. *Understanding Reading*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1971

Smith, Frank and Deborah Holmes. "The Independence of Letter, Word, and Meaning Identification in Reading." *Reading Research Quarterly* 6, No. 3, 1971

GUIDELINES FOR TRANSCRIPTION

Several of the exercises in this manual require tape-recording and transcribing portions of conversation. The following are some basic guidelines for transcribing. A look at the transcript in this manual will also be useful.

(1) Decide how you will refer to each speaker, either by full name or by initial. Put this full name or initial in front of every new turn taken by that speaker.

Ann: Okay.
Melissa: Wait. Okay.
Ann: Measure—Do it again.

(2) In order to transcribe accurately everything a given speaker says, you may want to listen to a small segment, stop the tape, write down what you remember, and then listen to that segment again. Do not be surprised if what you *think* you hear and what is actually said are two different things. That is the reason for replaying difficult or quickly spoken segments. It may be helpful to listen to longer stretches on both sides of the troublesome sequence.

(3) Sometimes two people start talking at once, or one person interrupts another. This is usually shown in transcription with brackets marking the overlapping section:

Melissa: It's [as far out as
Ann: [No, it might not be] it can go.

It is, of course, often difficult to hear what either speaker is saying in a case of overlap. As you can note, the continuing utterance of the person who keeps on talking after the overlap should be transcribed.

(4) Sometimes it is simply impossible to hear or understand what someone has said. This is dealt with by using square brackets; sometimes the word *unintelligible* is also included.

T: I'm going to [unintelligible] I'm going to go over to the listening center.

In other cases, you may not be entirely sure about a given word or sequence. This can be indicated as follows:

Pupil: I think we're gonna have some fun.

It may sometimes be impossible to tell who is talking. This can be indicated as follows:

(Unknown Speaker): I don't think so.

(5) There may be some information concerning nonverbal behavior or pauses that you want to include in your transcript. Parenthesis can be used for this:

Albert: Bambi.
Garnett: (shakes head "no")
Albert: What?
T: [unintelligible] (pause) Who is Dan talking to?
Pupils: (raise hands)

TAPE TRANSCRIPT

INTRODUCTION

WHEN IS READING?

WHEN'S READING?

CAN WE HAVE A STORY NOW?

IS THIS READING TIME OR SHARING TIME?

IT'S NOT YOUR TURN TO READ.

"EH" LIKE IN ERIN.

SEE THE LITTLE PUPPY BIG. HEY, WAIT A MINUTE. BIG?

THE *O* SAYS ITS NAME.

WHAT DOES *K* SAY?

WHAT DOES *4* SAY?

WHAT *DOES* 4 SAY?

SONG — A—B—C—D—E—F—G—X—Y—A—B

Finding out *when* reading is, is the first step to finding out *what* reading is. Here are some videotapes of children reading during their regular school day. You'll have a chance to see some parts of the tapes twice.

Please remember, it is harder to look at tapes of really occurring activities than at tapes of actors presenting a performance. Remember, too, that the eye and ear of the video equipment emphasize certain things that might not be noticed if you were present in the classroom. Most important, remember these are only short examples and it is not reasonable to make judgments about the abilities or personalities of the teachers or the students.

In this particular classroom, we found the children reading throughout the day, from 8:30 in the morning 'til school's out at 3:00. Here are some of those times.

8:30 AM
THE MENU: FUNCTIONAL WORD ATTACK

T: Jonathan, would you like to read our lunch for us today? What day of the week is it today? Do you remember?

Jonathan: Wednesday.

T: Can you find that? Follow down under Wednesday.

Jonathan: Vegetable soup. Rat beef/pause/Sand

T: They're abbreviations there. What do you suppose sand [stands for?]

Jonathan. [Sandwiches.]

Sophia: Sandwiches.

T: OK. What kind of beef do you think that stands for?

What is [it / Rat] R-O-T? [R-A-T! / Rat sandwich]

Child:

T: Strange abbreviation. What do you think that must mean? Grant?

Child: Um.

Grant: (No answer)

T: What's the answer to my question?/pause/What was the question? /pause/ Anybody have an idea? What kind of beef sandwiches do we usually have? Laura?

Laura: Roast beef.

T: Yeah. I bet it means roast beef. It's a funny way of abbreviating it. (noise) Sh! Shshh.

Jonathan: Fresh fruit.

T: Fresh fruit for dessert?

Jonathan: Peaches and cream.

T: OK. That sounds like a delish lunch. Mark?

(Entire Segment is Repeated)

9:30 AM
THE RECIPE: FUNCTIONAL WORD ATTACK

Meredith: Put in a mixing bowl.

T: Tell us what we're going to put in the mixing bowl.

Meredith: Um, one cup . . .

T: Can you work out that word?

Child: Luckwarm.

T: It's lukewarm.

Meredith: Lukewarm milk.

T: What does lukewarm mean?

Kids: What?

T: Does anybody know? Andrew?

Andrew: Quite warm.

T: Quite warm. It isn't hot, it isn't cold—in between.

We're going to have a big bowl and we're going to have milk and yeast, and we're going to add sugar, salt, eggs, cinnamon and butter, and what are we gonna do with all of that? Tells us what to do. [unintelligible] Can you tell us what to do?

Julie: Beat.

T: Beat and then a big word. It's a long word. Can you work it out? Jonathan? What is that long word? Julie?

Julie: Throughly.

T: No . . . Sophia?

Sophia: Thoroughly.

T: Thoroughly. What does it mean to beat thoroughly?

Sophia: It means to beat kind of softly.

T: Well, not really. Erin?

Erin: Sort of slow.

T: No . . . Julie?

Julie: Through the whole thing.

T: Through the whole thing. That's a very good explanation.

(Entire Segment Is Repeated)

11:30 AM
THE READING GROUP: SOCIAL WORK AND DECODING

Gene: *The um home . . .*

Grant: I'm trying to find the page.

Mark: Where your marker is.

Grant: I know.

Gene: *The home . . .*

T: I-N-G at the end says . . . *The homing . . .*

Gene: *The homing. The homing—The homing pigeon.*

Child: (Interrupts) How do you do this?

T: Why don't you find out?

Gene: *The homing pigeon.*

Laura: [unintelligible] *The pigeons are flying.*

Mark: [unintelligible] *looked out. He saw the pigeons.* [unintelligible] *he asked.*

Grant: Do I read right here?

T: I'm going to [unintelligible] I'm going to go over to the listening center.

Grant: Do I read right here?

Gene: You weren't listening, Mark.

T: Where did Mark . . . Where did Mark read?

Grant: Uh

T: What part did Mark read?

Grant: Right here?

T: We're gon- we're reading right over here now, Grant. We're skipping you now, you follow along where we are. Put your marker on so you won't lose your place. And listen to what the other people say.

Gene: I re—I read this one *Dan said, 'Homer is in the car. I have to'.*

Mark: It doesn't say car.

Gene: Oh yeah. *Dan said . . .* no *Dan said, 'Homer is in the um . . . c cage!'*

Grant: Cage, that's right.

Gene: *I have to—I have to go up to the roof. Mr. Day wants me to* [unintelligible] *no, to net—no . . .*

Mark: Yeah, that says "let".

Gene: *let me out—let—let him out.*

Mark: Uh huh. Go on.

Gene: Go on, Laura, Laura, Laura. You read the part where it says *Look*.

Mark: No, don't tell her.

Grant: No, you don't tell.

Laura: (reading [unintelligible]) (teacher returns)

Gene: I read the

T: Ssh.

Laura: (reading [unintelligible])

Mark: There's a space in there. There's a space in there.

T: That's right.

Gene: [unintelligible]

Mark: [unintelligible]

Grant: Where are we, right here?

T: What do you think?

Grant: Right here.

T: [unintelligible] (pause) Who is Dan talking to? What do you think . . .

Grant: *The father said, 'They can fly . . . far . . . '*

T: It's alright.

Grant: *far*

T: Think what it would say. *The father said it would fly far a-*

Grant: *-way.*

Gene: *A-way.* The a says its name.

T: Yeah.

Gene: *Away.*

T: Two a's say their names.

T: *A-way.*

Gene: Oh.

T: D'you hear it twice?

Gene: Yeah.

Grant: Did we turn the page yet?

Gene: No no no no no. I read this one.

T: OK.

Gene: *Dan was not happy now. He did not want Homer to fly far away. He ran out fast. He went up to the roof.*

Laura: (reading) [unintelligible]

Mark: *'No,' said Dan. 'I want Homer to stay in the cage.'*

Grant: *'No,' said M. 'No,' said Dan, 'I want . . . '*

Mark: Oh boy.

Grant: *I want Homer to stay in the cage.*

Gene: Cage!?

T: Did you listen to what Mark read? (teacher is interrupted

by another student) Did you listen to what Mark just read? What did Mark read?

Grant: Right here.

T: [No, he didn't.

Mark: No, no.]

Mark: I read what you just read.

T: He read exactly what you did. Were you watching me writing instead of [watching the book,] 'cause I turned my

Gene: [no. No no no.]

T: page late. And you turned yours just when I did. You need to watch the children who are reading. This is the part right here. See, [unintelligible], read this part. You put your marker there.

Gene: I'm gonna read this . . .

T: That's right.

Gene: *Mister Day looked at Dan. 'No, no,' he said . . . A bird . . . 'A bird has . . . '*

2 PM
THE NORTH WIND STORY:
COMPREHENSION AND PREDICTION

T: (reading) *The next morning, Peter woke up. He took the cloth and went home to his mother. 'The North Wind is very nice,' he said. 'He gave me a magic cloth.' 'What good is a cloth?' said Peter's mother. 'What good can it do?' 'Just say 'cloth, give me food',' said Peter, 'and you will have all the food you want.' 'Show me,' said his mother.*

Pupil: It's not gonna do it.

Pupil: Will you show us the pictures?

T: I showed you them. *So Peter put the cloth on the table and said 'Cloth, give me food.'*

Pupil: It didn't.

T: *The cloth did nothing. 'Hmm.' said Peter's mother. 'Well,' said Peter, 'this is no magic cloth. I'll go back to the North Wind and tell him.' So he said goodbye to his mother and off he went.* (break in tape) *The next morning Peter woke up. He took the goat and went home to his mother. 'The North Wind is very nice,' he told her. 'He gave me a magic goat. 'What can the goat do?' asked his mother. 'Just say 'Goat, goat, make gold.' And you will have all the gold you need.' 'Show me,' said his mother. So Peter called the goat and said 'Goat, goat, make gold.' The goat looked at Peter. It looked at Peter's mother. But it didn't make gold. 'Hmm,' said Peter's mother. 'Well,' said Peter, 'this is no magic goat. I must go back to the North Wind and tell him.' So he said goodbye to his mother and off he went again.* Jonathan?

Jonathan: He should know it's a magic goat because he should think it's a magic goat even though it didn't give him gold, because it gave him gold the first time.

T: You're right.

Pupil: [unintelligible]

T: Oh, maybe so. I'll go on and see. Can you sit quietly?

Pupil: Yeah.

T: OK. *He walked and he walked and he walked, and he found the North Wind. 'You took our flour,' said Peter, 'and you gave me a magic cloth, but the cloth was no good. So you gave me a magic goat but the goat is no good. Please give me back my flour.' 'I don't have your flour,' said the North Wind. 'I don't have another magic cloth, and I don't have another magic goat. All I have left is a magic stick. When you say 'Hit, stick, hit,' it will hit until you say 'Stop, stick, stop'.'* (Teacher shows pictures)

Pupil 1: Hit what?

Pupil 2: Hit him.

Pupil 3: Hit the innkeeper.

T: Think so?

Pupil 3: Yeah.

T: *'Will the magic stick help me?' asked Peter. 'It will,' said the North Wind. Peter thought and thought and thought. The magic cloth gave food at the inn; it gave no food at home. The magic goat gave gold at the inn, but it gave no gold at home. The innkeeper saw the magic cloth, the innkeeper saw the magic goat. At last Peter said; 'You are right. I will take the magic stick. Thank you very much.' And away he went.*

Pupil: It's gonna bong the innkeeper.

Pupil: I hope so.

T: *On the way home, Peter stopped at the inn. The innkeeper saw the stick in Peter's hand. 'Aha,' he thought, 'That must be a magic stick. I will have it for myself.' That night Peter put the stick beside his bed and he closed his eyes, but he didn't sleep. He waited. Soon the innkeeper opened Peter's door; he walked to Peter's bed; he touched the magic stick.*

Pupils: [unintelligible] I know what he's gonna say . . . "stick hit, hit."

T: *Peter opened his eyes. 'Hit, stick, hit,' he said, and the stick hit the innkeeper.*

Pupils: (laughter and applause)

WHEN IS READING?

JUST ABOUT ALL THE TIME.

NOW, FOR INSTANCE.

WHEN IS READING?